

Serial No.: 10/759,560

- 2 -

Art Unit: 1723

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for forming at least one opening in a membrane pot, the method comprising:

providing at least one membrane, the membrane having at least one membrane end;

providing a mould for potting the membrane end, the mould comprising a base comprising an ejector portion and at least one formation for forming at least one opening in the membrane pot;

filling the mould with a curable potting material;

positioning the membrane end in the mould;

allowing the potting material to at least partially cure, whereby the membrane ends are secured in the membrane pot; and

raising the ejector portion to demould demoulding the membrane pot, the membrane pot having at least one opening.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising: mounting the mould on a vertically movable platform.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the formation comprises at least one upstanding pin mounted in a base of the mould.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein raising the ejector portion comprises demoulding the membrane pot comprises raising a central ejector portion of the base mould, whereby the pot is ejected from the mould.

796680

Serial No.: 10/759,560

- 3 -

Art Unit: 1723

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

heating the mould to assist curing of the curable potting material.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

centrifuging the mould to assist penetration of the curable potting material into membrane fiber walls.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

fitting a guide or collar around a periphery of the mould.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the mould comprises a base having a plurality of upstanding pins.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the upstanding pins are sized and distributed for correct gas bubble distribution.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

positioning a plurality of membrane ends in the mould, wherein the membranes comprise hollow fiber membranes.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the membrane ends are positioned uniformly in the mould.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

sealing the membrane ends.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the membrane ends are uniformly distributed in relation to at least one opening.

796680

Serial No.: 10/759,560

- 4 -

Art Unit: 1723

14. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

positioning the membranes in a sleeve that holds the membranes; and
inserting the membranes into a guide or collar around a periphery of the mould.

15. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein filling the mould with a curable potting material is conducted prior to positioning the membrane ends in the mould.

16. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

fanning the membrane ends prior to positioning the membrane ends in the mould.

17. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

trimming the membrane ends to provide a uniform membrane length.

18. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

cutting the membrane pot transversely to open the membrane ends to facilitate withdrawal of filtrate from lumens during operation.

19. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

positioning a plurality of membrane ends in the mould so as to form an array.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19; wherein the array is a cylindrical array.

796680